

ad purchasing intermediary 35 in turn sells each purchasing card 40 at a slightly higher cost to a consumer. For instance, a consumer would pay \$25 for a purchasing card 40 which has an available credit limit of \$22. The \$3 difference in cost is a service fee captured by the purchasing intermediary 35. It should also be noted that as additional inducement for providing the actual physical purchasing cards, the credit card provider may receive a fee from the purchasing intermediary for each card which is activated and/or used by a consumer.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-14 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Please add the following new claims.

15. (New) A method of transacting an anonymous purchase, comprising:

acquiring a purchase card from a purchase card provider, the purchase card includes an associated account number, but does not identify the purchaser;

providing purchase transactional information, including the account number associated with the purchase card, to a retailer, the retailer being different from the purchase card provider; and

transacting a purchase with the retailer based on the account number associated with the purchase card, thereby maintaining the anonymity of the purchaser.

16. (New) The method of Claim 15 wherein the step of acquiring a purchase card further comprises purchasing the purchase card from a retail establishment, where the purchase card is provided to the retail establishment by the purchase card provider.

17. (New) The method of Claim 15 wherein the step of transacting a purchase with the retailer further comprises the step of authorizing the purchase with the purchase card provider.

18. (New) A method of transacting an anonymous purchase, comprising:

supplying at least one purchase card from a purchasing intermediary to a retail establishment;

purchasing the purchase card from the retail establishment, the purchase card including an associated account number;

providing purchase transactional information, including the account number associated with the purchase card, to a retailer, the retailer being different from the purchasing intermediary; and

transacting a purchase with the retailer based on the account number associated with the purchase card, thereby maintaining the anonymity of the purchaser.

19. (New) The method of Claim 18 further comprises purchasing the at least one purchase card by the purchasing intermediary from a purchase card provider, the purchase card provider being independent from the retailer.

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20. (New) The method of Claim 18 wherein the step of purchasing the purchase card further comprises activating the purchase card by the contacting the purchasing intermediary.

21. (New) The method of Claim 18 wherein the step of transacting a purchase with the retailer further comprises the step of authorizing the purchase with the purchase card provider.
